

441—58.28(234) Payment.

58.28(1) *Maximum payment.* The maximum payment shall not exceed \$500 per authorization period. This amount can be applied to a single need or to several needs, not to exceed the maximum amount. Payment shall be issued in the amount of the need, not to exceed \$500. When the emergency need is greater than \$500 (or more than the maximum amount still available to the applicant, if a subsequent request is being made), emergency assistance shall be approved only when the applicant provides verification that either:

- a. The vendor will accept payment of up to \$500 (or the maximum amount available) to resolve the emergency, or
- b. Another source will supply the amount needed over and above the emergency assistance payment amount.

58.28(2) *Vendor payment.* Payment shall be issued directly to the vendor in form of a state warrant unless the vendor is a state employee.

- a. Vendors shall be required to complete Form 470-2781, Approval for Vendor Payment, before payment shall be issued. The vendor shall provide a copy of IRS Form W-9, Request for Taxpayer Identification Number and Certification, if necessary, to resolve vendor name or vendor number discrepancies.

- b. Form 470-2781 shall also be used to notify the vendor of the amount approved for payment. Payment is owed to the vendor in the amount approved on Form 470-2781 even if emergency assistance funds are exhausted or emergency assistance eligibility is found not to exist when system entries are made. If the household provides verification of an emergency item and the cost of the item on another document, there is no need to send Form 470-2781 to the vendor to reverify the information.

- c. Payment to state employees shall be made as follows:

- (1) If the emergency assistance payment is for a service, such as furnace repair, the payment is included in the vendor's regular state paycheck as extra pay.
- (2) If the emergency assistance payment is for goods, such as rent, rent deposit, or purchase of heating equipment, payment to the vendor is processed in the form of a travel voucher.

58.28(3) *Authorization period.* The authorization period is limited to a period of 30 consecutive days in a 12-month period, and payment shall be approved if the request is received within that period. The 30-day authorization period begins on the date the first emergency assistance payment is approved for an eligible household. The household may be eligible for more than one payment as long as the total amount of all payments does not exceed the maximum amount and all requests for additional payments are received within the period of 30 consecutive days. Any portion of the maximum payment amount not used in the 30-day authorization period cannot be carried forward to a future authorization period.

58.28(4) *Returned warrants and donations to emergency assistance.* Any refunds of emergency assistance money shall be returned to the DHS county office. Returned funds shall be deposited back into the emergency assistance account.

- a. When an emergency assistance client or vendor returns the emergency assistance warrant or returns an emergency assistance payment in the form of a money order, personal check, or cash, the county office shall accept the repayment and complete Form 470-0009, Official Receipt.

- b. The department may receive refunds of rent deposits that were paid on behalf of emergency assistance clients by a combination of assistance from the emergency assistance program and other persons or organizations.

- c. Donations shall be handled in the same manner as refunds and shall be deposited into the emergency assistance account.

58.28(5) *Misdirected warrants.* Replacement of an emergency assistance warrant does not apply when the warrant is inadvertently delivered to the emergency assistance client rather than the vendor, and the client endorses it with the client's own name and cashes it. This is not an overpayment, because the warrant is issued on behalf of the same client who cashed it. It is up to the vendor to pursue the matter with the post office, the place of business that cashed the warrant, or the client and to work out possible repayment arrangements.